

## GOVERNMENT ACTIONS REVIEW

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### *Plan Approval*

*The Secretary of the Interior approved the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Plan on November 10, 1979, thereby making the Conservancy and local governments within the Santa Monica Mountains Zone eligible for the authorized five-year, \$30 million federal grant program provided for in Section 507(n) of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. The grant eligibility period ended in 1985 without the Department of the Interior awarding any grants. While no grants were awarded, Section 507 provided an alternative method of transferring federal money to state and local governments by authorizing reimbursements for land purchased after establishment of the recreation area. This cooperative funding mechanism has resulted in over \$34 million being spent for high priority acquisitions in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA).*

### *Federal*

*As of fiscal year 2001-2002, approximately \$136.5 million in federal land acquisition funding has been approved. In fiscal year 1999, Congress appropriated \$2 million for acquisitions within the SMMNRA for purchase of property along the Backbone Trail. However, this appropriation contained a 100% non-federal matching requirement. Also, in fiscal year 1999, Congress passed the Transportation Efficiency Act for the Twenty-first Century (T-21), which contained \$5.5 million of funding for trails acquisition within the SMMNRA. In federal fiscal year 2000, Congress appropriated an additional \$2 million containing this same matching requirement. This year, \$500,000 in T-21 funds were appropriated for trails acquisition within the SMMNRA.*

### *Bonded Indebtedness*

*The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Act requires a “listing” of the amount of money necessary to retire bonded indebtedness already incurred which would contribute to further development in the mountains inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The origin of this requirement is Section 507(n) of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 which permits the Secretary of the Interior to grant federal funds to retire indebtedness found to contribute to inappropriate development.*

*Currently, no municipal water or utility district has indicated any willingness to apply for such a “buy out” grant. Nor is it apparent that bonded indebtedness per se is acting as an inducement for more development. During administrative consideration of the 1980-81 Governor’s budget, the Conservancy proposed undertaking a study of the need for utility “buy out” grants. That budget proposal was not approved and no study has been conducted.*